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ABSTRACT

One partial solution to problems caused by declining enrollment and decreasing revenues, particularly in small districts, is the sharing of personnel, facilities, materials, and even students among neighboring districts. The first section of this report summarizes results from a survey sent to all public and nonpublic school administrators in and around a seven-county area in East Central Iowa. Administrators were asked to identify sharing needs for the 1983-84 year which, in turn, were compiled in a master listing to help schools plan sharing arrangements. Anticipated sharing needs were highest in vocational agriculture, foreign language, and high school English. Administrators were also asked for a description of 1982-83 sharing. The most frequently shared personnel were foreign language instructors, counselors, and special education teachers. Based on previous data, there has been a sizeable increase in inter-district sharing over the past 4 years. The number of positions shared in the area rose from 6 in 1979-80 to 22 in 1982-83. The second section contains a taxonomy of strategies for coping with declining enrollment. A final section of four Eastern Iowa case studies provides detail and local perceptions of advantages and disadvantages of inter-district sharing. (Author/BRR)

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# RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT

**Title:** REPORT ON INTER-DISTRICT SHARING

**Prepared for:** AREA X ADMINISTRATORS

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REPORT ON INTER-DISTRICT SHARING

Abstract

Many public school districts in Iowa and the Nation are facing problems caused by declining enrollments. One partial solution is the sharing of personnel, facilities, materials, and even students among neighboring districts. The first section of the report summarizes results from a survey sent to all public and nonpublic school administrators in and around a seven-county area in East Central Iowa. Administrators were asked to identify sharing needs for the 1983-84 year which, in turn, were compiled in a master listing to help schools plan sharing arrangements. Anticipated sharing needs were highest in vocational agriculture, foreign language, and high school English. Administrators were also asked for a description of 1982-83 sharing. The most frequently shared personnel were foreign language instructors, counselors, and special education teachers. Based on previous data, there has been a sizeable increase in inter-district sharing over the past four years. The number of positions shared in the area rose from six in 1979-80 to 22 in 1982-83. The second section contains a brief literature review on inter-district sharing which includes a taxonomy of strategies for coping with declining enrollment. A need to provide more detail on how districts share and local perceptions on the advantages and disadvantages was identified. Consequently, a final section was written which includes four case studies on sharing in Eastern Iowa.

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# RESULTS OF THE 1982-83
# INTER-DISTRICT SHARING QUESTIONNAIRE

Research and Evaluation Program
Grant Wood Area Education Agency

The first purpose of the Inter-District Sharing Questionnaire was to survey anticipated need or desire to share personnel, students, equipment, facilities, or materials to help administrators plan for the 1983-84 year. The second goal was to collect information on actual sharing activities implemented during the 1982-83 year and to compare this with past levels of sharing.

In mid-December, 1982, questionnaires were sent to the 39 public school districts and the 25 approved nonpublic schools in Area 10 and to the 24 public districts contiguous to Area 10 schools. Area 10 is a seven-county region in East Central Iowa. Response to the questionnaire was high, particularly among the public schools (Area 10 public districts had a return rate of 100 percent; contiguous public districts had a return rate of 88 percent; and Area 10 nonpublic schools had a return of 48 percent.).

## Results--Expressed Interest in Sharing for 1983-84 Year

Twenty-five Area 10 and six contiguous public districts expressed an interest in sharing personnel or receiving additional students. None of the 12 nonpublic schools who returned the questionnaire reported an interest in sharing. Table 1 presents content areas of interest for the 1983-84 year.* Expressed need was highest in vocational agriculture, and the accompanying map indicates that some sharing arrangements are at least geographically feasible. Next on the list of expressed interest was foreign language, followed by English. In comparison to personnel sharing, interest in sharing facilities, materials, and equipment was low--only seven districts reported interest in sharing nonpersonnel resources.

## Results--1982-83 Sharing Activities in Area 10

Table 2 presents sharing activities as reported by school superintendents. Instances of sharing special education teachers were included, but sharing of special education students were excluded. Nineteen of the 39 public districts in Area 10 reported at least one sharing arrangement; none of the approved nonpublic schools reported sharing activities. Nearly all arrangements involved staff traveling from one district to another. Students were transported in only three cases: the HLV/Belle Plaine/BGM Alternative High School, the Linn-Mar/Marion Alternative High School, and the physics program for Lisbon students at Mount Vernon.

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*A district by district report of expressed interest in sharing was disseminated in early January, 1983. Extra copies can be obtained from the Research and Evaluation Program, GWAEA, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Table 3 summarizes shared positions by content area. Activity was highest in foreign language. Although interest was highest in sharing vocational agriculture, no sharing arrangements were reported for the 1982-83 year. Table 3 also presents comparable data for the previous three years. There has been a notable increase in sharing in foreign language (particularly Spanish), special education staff, and physics. Although the popular literature forecasts a shortage in math teachers, none of the Area 10 districts reported sharing in this area. Tables 4 and 5 illustrate the rapid growth in sharing over the last three years. While the number of sharing districts has leveled out, the number of positions shared has increased sizably.

The Kirkwood KEY Program provides vocational training to juniors and seniors in Area 10 on a tuition basis. Although it is not an inter-district sharing activity per se, it is included here because it represents active sharing between a district and another educational agency. In all instances, students travel to one of six sites. Table 4 lists student enrollments by year, content area, and site. Enrollments have remained stable at the 400-student mark except for a decline last year. About 40 percent of the students enrolled in auto mechanics this year, with 50 percent of the enrollment about equally divided among health occupations (mainly training for nursing aides and orderlies), welding/cutting, and building/construction trades. Vocational agriculture was among the lower enrollment areas.

Table 1. Expressed Interest in Sharing
by Content Area

| Content Area | # of districts expressing interest for 83-84 | |
|---|---|---|
| | Sharing Personnel | Receiving Students |
| vocational agriculture | 5 | 14 |
| foreign language (Spanish, French, German) | 4 | 8 |
| English/language arts | 4 | 1 |
| physical education | 3 | 1 |
| art | 2 | 1 |
| home economics | 2 | 1 |
| computer | 2 | 1 |
| secondary special education | 2 | 1 |
| guidance/counseling | 2 | 0 |
| librarian | 2 | 0 |
| social studies | 1 | 1 |
| industrial arts | 1 | 1 |
| elementary principal | 1 | 0 |
| high school drama | 1 | 0 |
| gifted and talented | 1 | 0 |
| advanced high school courses | 1 | 2 |
| advanced science | 1 | 2 |
| advanced math | 0 | 2 |
| physics | 0 | 1 |
| business | 0 | 2 |
| music | 0 | 1 |
| graphics | 0 | 1 |
| preschool special education | 0 | 1 |

INTER-DISTRICT SHARING QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Vocational Agriculture

expressed interest in vocational agriculture teacher in 1983-84

expressed interest in receiving vocational agriculture students in 1983-84

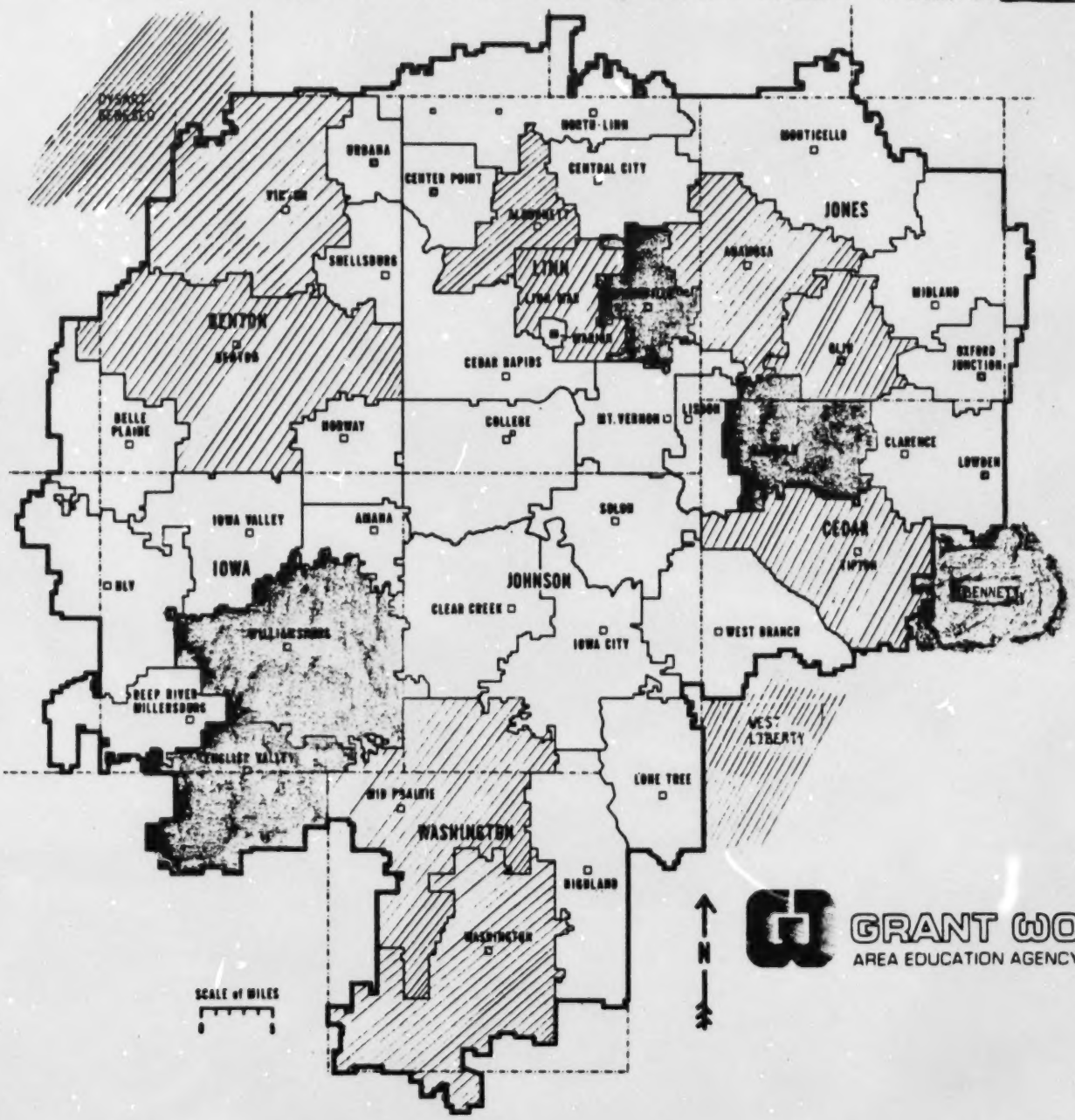


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Table 2. Inter-District Sharing Activities, 1982-83, by District

| District | Shared With | Content Area | Staff FTE in District | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alburnett | Center Point, Central City, North Linn, Shellsburg | Gifted and Talented | .2 | |
| Belle Plaine | HLV | LD Resource | .5 | |
| | HLV | Spanish | .4 | |
| | HLV | Physics | .2 | |
| | HLV, BGM | Alternative High School | | Students sent to neutral site |
| Center Point | Alburnett, Central City, North Linn, Shellsburg | Gifted and Talented | .2 | |
| | Urbana | Spanish | .5 | |
| Central City | Alburnett, Center Point, North Linn, Shellsburg | Gifted and Talented | .2 | |
| Clarence-Lowden | Lincoln | LD Teacher | .5 | |
| Deep River-Millersburg | English Valleys | Counselor | .4 | |
| | English Valleys | LD Teacher | .4 | |
| English Valleys | Deep River-Millersburg | Counselor | .6 | |
| | Deep River-Millersburg | LD Teacher | .5 | |
| HLV | Belle Plaine, BGM | Alternative High School | | Students sent to neutral site |
| | Belle Plaine | Spanish | .4 | |
| | Belle Plaine | Physics | .8 | |
| | Belle Plaine | LD Resource | .5 | |
| | BGM | Instrumental Music | .8 | |
| | Lynnville-Sully | Gifted and Talented | .5 | |

Table 2. (continued)

| District | Shared With | Content Area | Staff FTE in District | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lincoln | Lisbon | Counselor | .6 | |
| | Olin | Bus Mechanic | .8 | |
| | Clarence-Lowden | LD Teacher | .5 | |
| Lisbon | Lincoln | Counselor | .4 | |
| | Mount Vernon | Physics | .2 | 9 students sent to Mount Vernon |
| | Mount Vernon | Bus Maintenance | | |
| Linn-Mar | Marion | Alternative High School | .5 | Students sent to neutral site |
| | Marion | French | .2 | |
| Marion | Linn-Mar | French | .8 | |
| | Linn-Mar | Alternative High School | .5 | Students sent to neutral site |
| Mount Vernon | Lisbon | Physics | .8 | |
| | Lisbon | Bus Maintenance | | |
| North Linn | Alburnett, Center Point, Central City, Shellsburg | Gifted and Talented | .2 | |
| Olin | Lincoln | Bus Mechanic | .2 | |
| Oxford Junction | Lost Nation | Industrial Arts | .5 | |
| | Lost Nation | Home Economics | .5 | |
| | Lost Nation | Spanish/Language Arts | .5 | |
| | Lost Nation | Counselor | .5 | |
| Shellsburg | Alburnett, Center Point, Central City, North Linn | Gifted and Talented | .2 | |
| Urbana | Center Point | Spanish | .3 | |
| Vinton | Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School | Spanish | .5 | |

Sharing of special education students and isolated sharing of high school students are not included.

Table 3. Inter-District Sharing Activities
in Area 10, by Content Area

| Content Area | # of positions shared | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1982-83 | 1981-82 | 1980-81 | 1979-80 |
| foreign language total | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| (Spanish subtotal) | (3) | (0) | (0) | (0) |
| (Spanish/English subtotal) | (1) | (1) | (1) | (1) |
| (French subtotal) | (1) | (0) | (0) | (0) |
| guidance and counseling | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| special education teachers | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| alternative high school program | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| bus maintenance | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| physics | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| talented and gifted | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| home economics | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| industrial arts | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| instrumental music | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| vocational agriculture | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| remedial reading | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 22 | 14 | 7 | 6 |

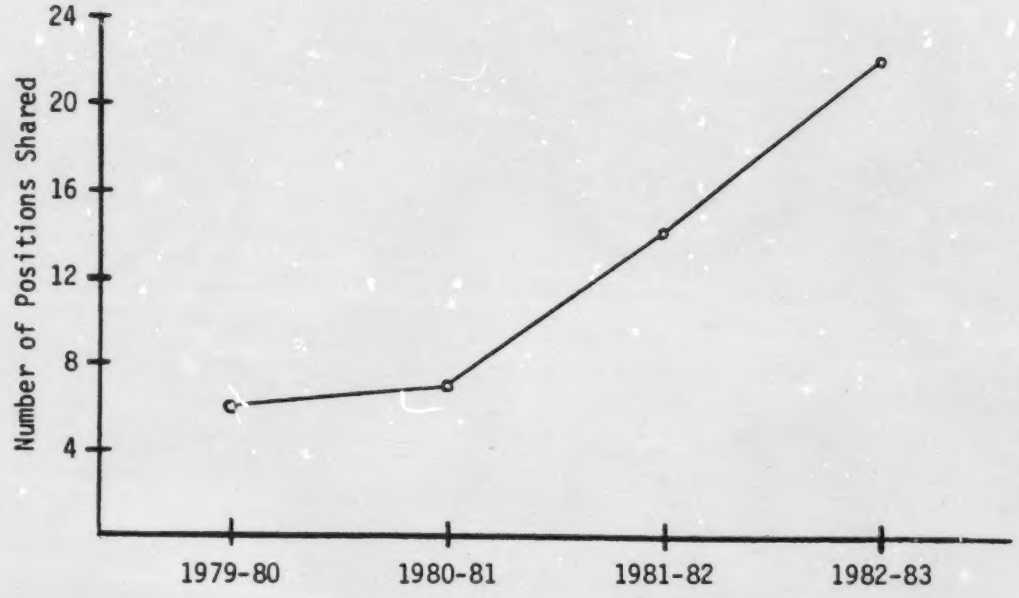


Table 4. Total number of positions shared in Area 10 by year.

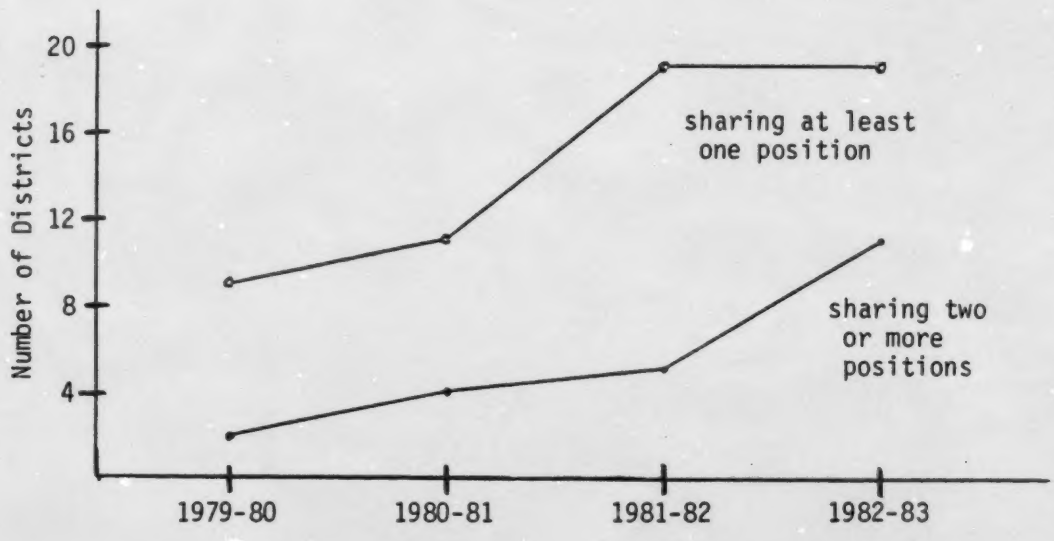


Table 5. Number of districts in Area 10 sharing personnel by year.

Table 6. Kirkwood KEY Program Enrollments

| Content Area | first semester enrollment 1982-83 | 1981-82 | 1980-81 | 1979-80 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| automotive mechanics | 160 | 129 | 150 | 165 |
| health occupations | 79 | 63 | 69 | 68 |
| welding/cutting | 64 | 77 | 114 | 92 |
| building/construction trades | 58 | 53 | 43 | 67 |
| child care aide | 14 | 10 | 27 | 9 |
| vocational agriculture | 14 | 9 | 28 | 0 |
| business/office education | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| keypunch | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 |
| horticulture | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Total | 399 | 341 | 431 | 419 |
| **Sites** | | | | |
| Cedar Rapids | 150 | 113 | 165 | 126 |
| Iowa City | 104 | 88 | 114 | 104 |
| Williamsburg | 57 | 56 | 61 | 62 |
| Washington | 51 | 46 | 53 | 64 |
| Monticello | 29 | 24 | 38 | 36 |
| Belle Plaine | 8 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| Center Point | 0 | 0 | 0 | 27 |
| Total | 399 | 341 | 431 | 419 |

## LITERATURE REVIEW ON INTER-DISTRICT SHARING

Inter-district sharing is viewed here as one solution to the problems encountered in small districts, particularly problems caused by declining enrollment and decreasing revenues. As one superintendent phrases it, "sharing is a means to enable us to offer a comprehensive educational program, even if we can't have a comprehensive school." Writings on inter-district sharing are limited. For example, in March, 1982, the Institute for Responsive Education published A Review of the Literature and Annotated Bibliography on Managing Decline in School Systems as an effort "to provide theoretical and practical help to school managers and policymakers as they face a condition of declining resources, enrollments, and political support." In a unique table entitled, "A compendium of advice to school managers as they adjust to decline," only two of the 42 documents address inter-district sharing.[1]

The amount of sharing occurring among districts is difficult to monitor. In a seven-county area in East Central Iowa, a recent survey[2] revealed that the percentages of districts sharing at least one program for the 1979-80, 1980-81, 1981-82, and 1982-83 years were 23%, 28%, 49%, and 49%, respectively. These figures rely heavily on local demographics and vary considerably from state to state and even within a state. At the national level, Dembowski and Gay (1979) conducted a 1977 survey of 310 public districts and asked them the question, "Since 1970, has your district cooperated with other school districts or regional agencies to provide joint services?" With about one-third of the districts responding, the results revealed that 69% of the districts reported cooperation.

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[1] An excellent job is done in many other areas such as impact of decline, planning, grade reorganization, school closings, and staff reduction.

[2] Results of the 1982-83 Inter-District Sharing Questionnaire available from the Research and Evaluation Program, Grant Wood Area Education Agency, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

This figure by itself is not very meaningful, because the question included regional agencies and the term "joint services" is vague. Of greater interest are the results on what did and did not affect the amount of sharing. Among districts with increasing enrollment (from 1970 to 1977) 75% reported cooperation, but for the declining districts the figure was 65%. Enrollment change had little to do with degree of sharing. District size, on the other hand, was related--56% of the districts with K-12 enrollments over 10,000 cooperated, but 82% of the districts under 10,000 enrollment reported sharing joint services. It would be useful to learn if these trends have changed since 1977.

What little literature there is on inter-district sharing tends to see only marginal value in this procedure. For example, in the American Association of School Administrator's Critical Issues Report on Declining Enrollment (1981) only several pages of the 80-page report are devoted to "Working with Other Districts." Witness also another AASA publication entitled, Declining Enrollments: What To Do (1974). Tucked into a question and answer format at the end of a chapter on closing school buildings is this question, "What about inter-district sharing?" Their answer is quoted below:

> "In theory, inter-district sharing is a viable solution to enrollment decline. However, in practice, it is difficult if not at times, impossible, to effect. If one community is experiencing decline, while its neighboring communities are in a period of growth, the logical conclusion would be a leasing plan. The major opposition is the desire of parents to keep their children close to home. Bussing children to the next town down the road is equal to sending them into outer space. Parents of elementary children just won't do it. It would be far easier to go through a district re-organization of facility usage and bus older students to a neighboring district, than to bus elementary schoolers." (p. 42)

A more optomistic and useful treatment of inter-district sharing is provided by the Educational Facilities Laboratory in their 78-page report, Planning for Declining Enrollment in Single High School Districts,

(Bussard and Green, 1981). The comprehensive report is the result of extensive workshops, full-day meetings, and two-day retreats for a consortium of students, teachers, and administrators from six districts facing decline. The authors' thesis is that planning for decreases in high school enrollment is more crucial and more complex than planning for elementary enrollment decline. A significant contribution of the report is a taxonomy of strategies in coping with declining enrollment, most of which involve some form of sharing. An abbreviated outline of the taxonomy is appended. As a means of maximizing the utility of the taxonomy, the report illustrates the strategies with an example in the area of instrumental music, which is paraphrased below:

I A. Make changes within the existing school structure - With declining enrollment in a few years, you won't be able to "field" a full orchestra or band. So, instead of pushing big ensembles, you'll shift gears to small ensemble work--brass quintets, chamber orchestra, etc., and emphasize instruments that can be played in smaller groups. You may have to go to a part-time teacher.

I B. Reorganize district grade structure - By bringing the ninth grade into the high school, you will be able to have a full orchestra. The quality may not be as good--it won't be as challenging to advanced students. (So, for them, you might consider some other options, too.)

II A. Share programs/services/staff with other school districts - You co-sponsor an orchestra and band with another high school. In fact, the same teacher works with students in each district part-time, and everybody gathers at one school (or alternately each week) for large practices twice a week.

II C. Consolidate - By consolidating two high schools you've got enough students to make an orchestra, and have a full-time music program. The only question is which music teacher to keep.

III A. Widen or redefine clientele - Since you've got the instruments and you need more players, you choose to let anybody in the community who wants to study an instrument borrow it for lessons, practice, and join the orchestra. You may even move rehearsal time to evenings. In effect, you're creating a community orchestra, with a core of high school students.

III B. Work with colleges and other businesses, institutions, and individuals - Some of your advanced students join the orchestra of a local college. Maybe there already is a community orchestra and your students join that. Practice sessions are held in the high school.

The authors note that sharing with other school districts rather than other institutions has some decided advantages--they have the same general mission and goals, work under common state laws and requirements, and serve the same general clientele. They suggest that districts start slowly, that shared programs should initially be new, enrichment programs and not ones which replace existing programs. This allows for a period of testing, adjustment, and building trust. In other words, districts should begin the process of sharing before sharing arrangements are critical in maintaining program breadth and depth.

In the area of transportation, the authors agree that moving students is the most difficult arrangement, but not impossible. In deciding on who moves, the first thing to consider is facilities, followed by the number of people involved, and finally the distance/time/cost.

The following guidelines are offered by the authors for increasing the likelihood of successful sharing:

- early and joint planning,
- clearly written agreements including finances, responsibilities, and length of commitment,
- provision for termination/withdrawal, but with enough lead time for other arrangements,
- equitable cost sharing,
- provision for review, evaluation, and revising,
- stress the educational benefits of sharing,
- if students are moved, prepare them motivationally,
- keep the public informed,
- maintain a talent bank to match staff competency and needs for part-time teachers,
- seek ways to increase knowledge of people from potentially sharing districts,
- when there are strong feelings of separateness in districts, a consortium or intermediate agency may provide a better vehicle for sharing.

OUTLINE OF STRATEGIES IN COPING WITH DECLINING ENROLLMENT

(Abstracted from Bussard and Green, 1981)

I. Strategies within the School System

A. Changes within existing school structure
   1. change class size and structure--more use of independent study, educational technology, self-paced systems, large lecture courses
   2. combine related courses in same room, e.g., science, two levels of foreign language or art
   3. open elective courses to more grades and offer in alternate years
   4. reduce number of elective courses and/or increase number of required courses
   5. retrain or recruit faculty to teach in several areas
   6. change school year--shorter semesters and more of them may help retain courses
   7. change school day--fewer and longer blocks of time and extended hours increase flexibility and choice
   8. change school week, e.g., the four-day week can free up the fifth day for students to work or participate in vocational education in the community--the teacher is free for inservice training, achieving certification in another area, or teaching on a shared basis in another district

B. Reorganize district grade structure
   1. change three-year high school to a four-year high school
   2. move fifth and/or sixth grade into junior high level

C. Close a school building

II. Strategies in Cooperation with other School Districts

A. Share programs/staff/facilities directly with other districts
   1. teachers or administrators travel to two or more districts
   2. students travel to another district for program
   3. move specialized facilities (e.g., vocational or computer lab) among two or more districts
   4. telecommunication networks

B. Share staff and services through a regional consortium or education service agency
   1. use of specialized support personnel (e.g., psychologists, speech clinicians, social workers, and consultants)
   2. sharing of special services (e.g., cooperative inservice, computer data processing, and transportation)
   3. lending library of educational materials (e.g., books and films)
   4. cooperative purchasing

C. Consolidation

III. Strategies in Cooperation with Institutions outside the School System

A. Widen or redefine clientele
   1. oepn high school classes to adults
   2. design adult education classes which may or may not be targeted toward regular high school students
   3. provide day-care/nursery school service
   4. rent or give space to outside groups to raise revenue or increase community support

B. Work with colleges and other businesses, institutions, and individuals
   1. correspondence courses with local monitoring
   2. share teachers
   3. transport students to other attendance centers, colleges, trade schools, businesses, fine arts centers, etc.

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Zerchykov, R., Heleen, O., & Weaver, W., A Review of the Literature and an Annotated Bibliography on Managing Decline in School Systems, Institute for Responsive Education, 1982.

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*All reports are available on loan basis from the Professional Library at the Grant Wood AEA.

## PROFILES OF INTER-DISTRICT SHARING

Results from the Inter-District Sharing Questionnaire indicate that the amount of sharing is increasing, at least in Eastern Iowa, and yet there is little professional literature on sharing. In particular, there was a lack of descriptive case studies. The following profiles are included to give interested districts an idea of how other districts go about sharing and their perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of various sharing designs.

Two of the profiles describe designs which require transportation of students. Of particular interest was to see if, as one report states, "Bussing children to the next town down the road is equal to sending them into outer space." The evidence from those two profiles indicates that transportating students can work effectively. As with most cases, motivation to share is the key factor.

Project Stretch, in the northern part of Linn County, is an ambitious undertaking. A teacher/coordinator in gifted and talented education travels among seven buildings in five districts--a true test of willingness to cooperate. Indications are that the many people directly and indirectly involved are more than passing the test.

The Wilton/Durant experience was selected because of the subject areas shared--districts in Area 10 expressed greatest interest in sharing foreign language and vocational agriculture. Durant and Wilton also have "parity" in sharing; that is, each district contributes equally to the total arrangement, without exchange of money.

These case studies are just a sampling of inter-district sharing, and further work is needed. They are not a substitute for careful evaluation studies, but they are a start in providing a resource to educators. More profiles need to be collected, not only on arrangements in current operation but on sharing efforts that have failed, in order to understand the major factors of success.

## Sharing Profile: Lisbon/Mount Vernon

COOPERATING DISTRICTS - Lisbon Community School District (K-12 enrollment = 483) and Mount Vernon Community School District (K-12 enrollment = 909) located in East Central Iowa.

SUBJECT AREA SHARED - one-year high school physics course.

GENERAL DESIGN - Lisbon students travel to Mount Vernon.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS - first semester, 1982--nine Lisbon students and eleven Mount Vernon students; second semester, 1983--eight Lisbon students and ten Mount Vernon students.

SCHEDULING - Lisbon uses a seven-period day, and Mount Vernon uses a six-period day. Lisbon students must schedule sixth and seventh periods free in order to take the physics course at Mount Vernon. Lisbon students leave their high school daily at 1:45 p.m., part way into sixth period, arrive at Mount Vernon at about 2:00 p.m. in time to join Mount Vernon students for their last period physics class. Lisbon students return to Lisbon at 3:10 p.m., just before dismissal. There are several days for which Mount Vernon has school but Lisbon does not. In such cases, the Lisbon students are expected to provide their own transportation to and from Mount Vernon.

TRANSPORTATION - Lisbon transports the Lisbon students to and from the Mount Vernon high school on a regular-sized bus. Student travel time is approximately 20 minutes a day.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS - There is a written agreement between the two school boards. Lisbon provides the transportation and pays one-tenth of the physics teacher's salary. This was calculated in view of the fact that the physics teacher teaches five classes and about one-half of the students in the physics class are from Lisbon. The physics teacher holds a full time regular contract with Mount Vernon.

HISTORY - The 1982-83 year is the first year for the sharing activity. Previously, both schools offered physics. As a result of a staff resignation, Lisbon was able to reassign teachers in all areas except physics. According to the Lisbon administrators, the State Education Department required them to offer physics to their students. The physics enrollment at Mount Vernon is not large, but adequate to support the offering without sharing with another district. The physics arrangement was first discussed formally in the spring, 1982. For several years the two districts have cooperated in bus maintenance.

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE - The superintendent and high school principal at Mount Vernon were positive toward the sharing arrangement. Neither cited any disadvantages for Mount Vernon, but both mentioned that Lisbon had to adjust to some scheduling conflicts. The Mount Vernon Superintendent was not aware of any concerns on the part of the school board.

The Lisbon Superintendent described the sharing as going "fairly well." He viewed the scheduling conflicts (need for students to have sixth and seventh periods open, and days when Mount Vernon has school but Lisbon doesn't) and student time spent on the bus as minor problems and expressed most concern that Lisbon students were not able to get personal help from the teacher outside of class time. All in all, he felt the cost, time, and necessary adjustments were worth the opportunity to offer the class.

The Lisbon High School Principal sees the experience as a definite advantage. As with the superintendent, he cited lack of student contact with the Mount Vernon teacher as the major disadvantage. The principal reported that the sharing has a positive effect on communication between schools and gives Lisbon students a chance to make new friends. All administrators felt the students in the physics class got along well together.

TEACHER PERSPECTIVE - The Mount Vernon physics teacher feels that the sharing is a good arrangement. These Lisbon students were as well prepared for the course as Mount Vernon students. The class is somewhat overcrowded, particularly for lab work, but this problem was solved by rotating labs. The teacher uses some of the Lisbon physics equipment in his labs. Make-up work is difficult for Lisbon students. The teacher said that Lisbon students could call him at home if they have problems with homework, but he "isn't always home." There is no open conflict between Lisbon and Mount Vernon students, but students from the same school do tend to sit together. Overall, the fact that the students are sharing a class has had little to no effect on the quality of their education.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE - Three Lisbon and three Mount Vernon students were randomly selected and interviewed on the phone in early February, 1983. Below is a list of advantages and disadvantages of the sharing arrangement as cited by the students.

Advantages

- exciting to meet new people
- meet a new teacher with different viewpoints
- learn about new ways of teaching
- adds variety to the day
- refreshing to be in a different school and meet new friends
- riding on the bus releases tension
- competition for grades makes us work harder (2)
- decreases rivalry between schools, eliminates prejudice
- you can see that kids from another school are real people
- we save money (on teacher's salary)
- more variety of physics equipment, old and new

Disadvantages

- less individual attention when doing labs
- hard to see teacher on one to one
- hard to contact teacher before or after class
- too many students, physics is hard subject, and we don't get as much attention
- lose time riding on the bus and miss study halls
- lose a study hall
- bothersome trying to arrange studying with kids from other school
- uncomfortable at first, and it affected my grades
- gets the schools closer to consolidation, that's bad

The major advantage can be classified as exposure to new experiences and new people. The major disadvantage was a perceived lack of teacher attention. When asked if the sharing arrangement had a positive, negative, or neutral affect on their education, five said positive, and one said negative. Two of the three Lisbon students said, if they had a choice, they would prefer to take physics at their own school; the other preferred the class at Mount Vernon. It was apparent that all the students interviewed felt the relationships between students from the two schools were good.

## Sharing Profile: Project Stretch

COOPERATING DISTRICTS
Alburnett Community School District (K-12 enrollment = 714)
Center Point Consolidated School District (K-12 enrollment = 654)
Central City Community School District (K-12 enrollment = 629)
North Linn Community School District (K-12 enrollment = 903)
Shellsburg Community School District (k-12 enrollment = 392)
All located within a 25 mile radius in East Central Iowa

SUBJECT AREA SHARED - Program for talented and gifted students (Project Stretch)

GENERAL DESIGN - Coordinator/teacher travels among five districts.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS - Approximately 60 fourth, fifth, and sixth graders for 1982-83.

SCHEDULING - The coordinator/teacher travels to each district once a week. She works with children and consults with teachers in each district throughout the day except for Shellsburg, in which she spends a half day per week. The remaining half day is allotted to planning and workshop. Her yearly schedule is arranged prior to the year by studying the school calendars for each district. Daily schedules are arranged by her, the local faculty, and the building principals. Two of the districts have two elementary buildings between which she splits her time equally. She works with from three to six small, 'pullout' groups per day.

TRANSPORTATION - The Center Point Elementary building serves as her work base. She provides her own transportation and is reimbursed for mileage incurred from her work base. No children are transported for talented and gifted programming.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS - The five districts pay her salary and fringe benefits prorated on the time she spends in their districts. There are written agreements which are annually approved by each school board. She holds a fu'l time, regular contract with Center Point. The Center Point superintendent manages the finances and the Center Point Elementary principal supervises and evaluates her performance. She makes requests for materials and professional leaves to that principal.

HISTORY - The 1982-83 year is the second year for this sharing arrangement. Last year Urbana participated on a half day per week basis, but the school board did not approve the agreement for the 1982-83 year. The Urbana administrators supported the program but several board members were opposed to special, 'pullout' programs. Prior to the 81-82 year the five districts plus Springville and Urbana wrote a joint grant proposal to the Iowa State department. The districts were told that the proposal would be treated as seven separate proposals. At that time; such proposals were competitive, the districts did not feel optomistic for approval, and consequently withdrew the proposal.

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE - The supervising principal at Center Point cited many advantages of the sharing arrangement. The cooperation allows the schools to offer an important program at low cost. Because the districts can pool their finances, they are not only able to attract a competent specialist, but also able to retain her over the years providing program continuity. Sharing is also advantageous because the coordinator/teacher imports and exports ideas among the districts. The principal also observed that students learn about peers from other districts. They share some projects and there is constructive student competition among districts. He described the administrative arrangement as "pretty simple", due mainly to good inter-district cooperation. Administrators meet two to three times a year on talented and gifted education. He sees these meeting times well spent on coordination and communication. On the disadvantage side, the supervising principal commented that independent student study is hampered because the teacher is available only once a week. He noted that parent access to the teacher is limited. The coordinator/teacher position requires good organization,good public relations, and a high degree of independence. He feels that the present person has all of these traits but other districts who want to share might have difficulty recruiting this type of person.

In addition to the supervising principal at Center Point, three superintendents and three building principals were contacted for their perceptions. All of these administrators expressed satisfaction with the sharing arrangement, noting its financial and educational benefits in rural area. Several noted that the sharing facilitated inter-district cooperation in other areas but none mentioned any specific plans for sharing in other subject areas. None were aware of any concerns on the part of school board members. Specific disadvantages cited were: lack of availability of teacher to help students and to get acquainted with parents and community, lost teacher time due to travel, and specific advantages were: consistancy in weekly schedules, having an extra resource person in the district, and sharing of materials and community resources among disricts. All of those interviewed supported continuation of the sharing program.

TEACHER PERSPECTIVE - The coordinator/teacher feels the sharing is going very well, in fact she views it as a model program for delivery of low frequency services in rural areas. She anticipated problems in establishing rapport with parents and getting to know community resources in so many districts, but these have not been problems from her perspective. She attributes the smoothness in scheduling to excellent cooperation of the local administrators and staffs. Although she visits seven buildings per week, she expressed no disappointment in her level of acceptance by the faculties. She attends building meetings irregularly--when she is scheduled in the building. She visits with classroom teachers of talented and gifted students about once a month and writes monthly reports to keep administrators and staff informed of her activities. She has written a few articles for local school newsletters and attended open houses in each building. She does not perceive a problem in not being available daily to students, but expects to, when more independent projects are initiated. Some advantages of sharing are that she can borrow materials to share from a number of libraries and she has large pool of resource people and field visit sites to incorporate in the program.

## Sharing Profile: Durant/Wilton

COOPERATING DISTRICTS - Wilton Community School (82-83 K-12 enrollment = 878) and Durant Community School (82-83 K-12 enrollment = 694) in Southeast Iowa.

SUBJECT AREA SHARED - first- and second-year vocational agriculture on alternate years (also see profile on high school German).

GENERAL DESIGN - Durant transports students to Wilton.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS - averages between 12-16 students each year.

SCHEDULING - Durant students arrive daily at Wilton at 12:15 p.m. and return to Durant at 1:15 in time for their sixth-period class. Only Durant students attend the class; Wilton students sign up for one of four other vocational agriculture classes. The scheduling requires Durant students to miss part of their study hall or lunch period.

TRANSPORTATION - Durant provides bus transportation to Wilton; this bus also picks up Wilton students bound for community college classes and special education classes. Wilton transports students back to Durant, about five miles away. Student travel time is about 20 minutes per day.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS - There is no money exchange, because the Wilton agriculture teacher's time is offset by the Durant German teacher's time. There is no written agreement between school boards. The agriculture teacher holds a full time, regular contract with Wilton.

HISTORY - The 1982-83 year is the ninth year of operation for vocational agriculture sharing. The two districts have a long history of sharing, including shorthand and Spanish programs. They currently share a German teacher. Materials, such as drivers education texts and small engines, have been shared.

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE - According to the Durant Superintendent, there are many more advantages than disadvantages in sharing. Both districts benefit financially and educationally, and sharing promotes full employment of present teachers. The superintendent agrees with the high school principal that the lost travel time is a necessity and does not present a big problem. Both school boards support the program sharing.

The Wilton Administrators are equally positive. Scheduling is seen as the most difficult aspect in sharing, and they feel that holding the class at midday minimizes lost school time.

TEACHER PERSPECTIVE - The vocational agriculture teacher feels the sharing is working "fairly well" but has several concerns at the instructional level. Because of the alternating year schedule, juniors and seniors are mixed and some students take the second-year course before the first-year course. The age mixing is somewhat a factor, and the two courses are not completely independent of one another (Some material learned in the first-year course is helpful in understanding material in the second-year course.). The teacher feels that 45 minutes is too short a class period particularly in view that the first- and second-year courses are composites of vocational agriculture I, II, III, and IV. Some time must be spent on introductory material and reexplanation for slower learners. Also when the students work in the shop, only about 20 minutes of actual time is available because of preparation and cleanup. He did note that the Durant students are highly motivated for shop and make good use of available time. He feels the sharing has made for a stronger FFA program because of more participants and access to resources in two communities. His free time is not used efficiently, because the agriculture class is scheduled during the last part of his fourth period and the first part of his fifth period.

## Sharing Profile: Wilton/Durant

COOPERATING DISTRICTS - Wilton Community School (82-83 K-12 enrollment = 878) and Durant Community School (82-83 K-12 enrollment = 694) in Southeast Iowa.

SUBJECT AREA SHARED - first-year German and second-year German on alternating years (also see profile on vocational agriculture).

GENERAL DESIGN - Durant German teacher travels to Wilton.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS - 1982-83 second-year German has 10 students; first-year German averages about 18 students.

SCHEDULING - The German class at Wilton is held daily prior to the regular school day. The teacher arrives at Wilton at 7:40 a.m., teaches the 45-minute period, and returns to Durant at 8:35 a.m., part way into the first period (her planning period). There are several days in the year when Durant does not have school but Wilton does. On occasion the Durant teacher drives over, but usually the situation is handled through two-day assignments to students.

TRANSPORTATION - The teacher drives her own car to and from the Wilton High School. The high schools are about five miles apart. Students arrange their own transportation to the early class.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS - Wilton reimburses the Durant teacher for mileage. There is no payment for the Durant teacher, because Wilton provides a vocational agriculture teacher for Durant students for about the same amount of time. There is no written agreement between school boards. The German teacher has a full time, regular contract with Durant.

HISTORY - The 1982-83 year is the fourth year for sharing the German teacher. Previously, Wilton offered Spanish, taught by a combination English/Spanish teacher. The sharing arrangement was precipitated by several factors--the English/Spanish teacher resigned, Wilton felt the need for a full time English teacher, and student interest in Spanish was waning. The two districts have a long history of sharing programs. They currently share a vocational agriculture teacher and have shared shorthand and Spanish programs. They frequently share materials such as texts and machinery.

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE - The Wilton Superintendent and High School Principal are well satisfied with the German arrangement. The biggest problem is that students have to arrange rides to school, and their school day is longer. The principal noted that this was an advantage for some

students because it provides an extra period for study or another class. Wilton would prefer to offer first- and second-year German each year, but this is not feasible. The Durant Superintendent pointed out that the sharing avoids needless duplication of programs and associated costs. He said that the shadow of consolidation is always present for nearly all smaller districts, but this shadow has prevented neither Wilton or Durant in pursuing mutually beneficial sharing. The Durant Principal reported that both schools share German texts and materials freely and felt that communication between the high schools is very good.

TEACHER PERSPECTIVE - The Durant German teacher described the program in positive terms. Being a teacher in two districts presents no problems for her--she attends activities at both schools. Her Wilton students are friendly, and they tend to look at the individual rather than what school they are from. While the Wilton and Durant students don't attend class together, they do correspond in German as part of their program. Students from both districts plan and participate in a trip to Germany together every other year. Fund raising proceeds are kept separate for the schools. The teacher mentioned no problems for Wilton students in getting one-to-one help outside of regular class time.